Among those well-known figures whose spirit of adventure contributed to our early knowledge of the Pacific Coast are George Steller, the first scientist to set foot on Alaska; William Anderson, who accompanied Captain Cook; Archibald Menzies who sailed with Captain Vancouver, Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz, after whom the California poppy derived its scientific generic name; David Douglas the great botanical explorer; and many others who came to the new world and endured countless hardships to further knowledge.

The authors conclude with an account of the United States Exploring Expedition, 1853, which "marked the beginning of a new era in the development of the Far West, the most striking period in its history." This year, incidentally, marked the year of the founding of the California Academy of Sciences.

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STUDENT MEETING IN JUNE

ON SATURDAY afternoon, June 5, Student Members of the Academy will meet in Room 214, Simson African Hall, in Golden Gate Park, at 2:00 o'clock. Mr. William B. Pitts, Honorary Curator of Gem Minerals in the Academy, will demonstrate how he prepares the beautiful transparencies of colorful minerals which have roused the admiration of everyone who has seen Mr. Pitts' collection on display in the Academy's Museum.

Come and bring your friends.

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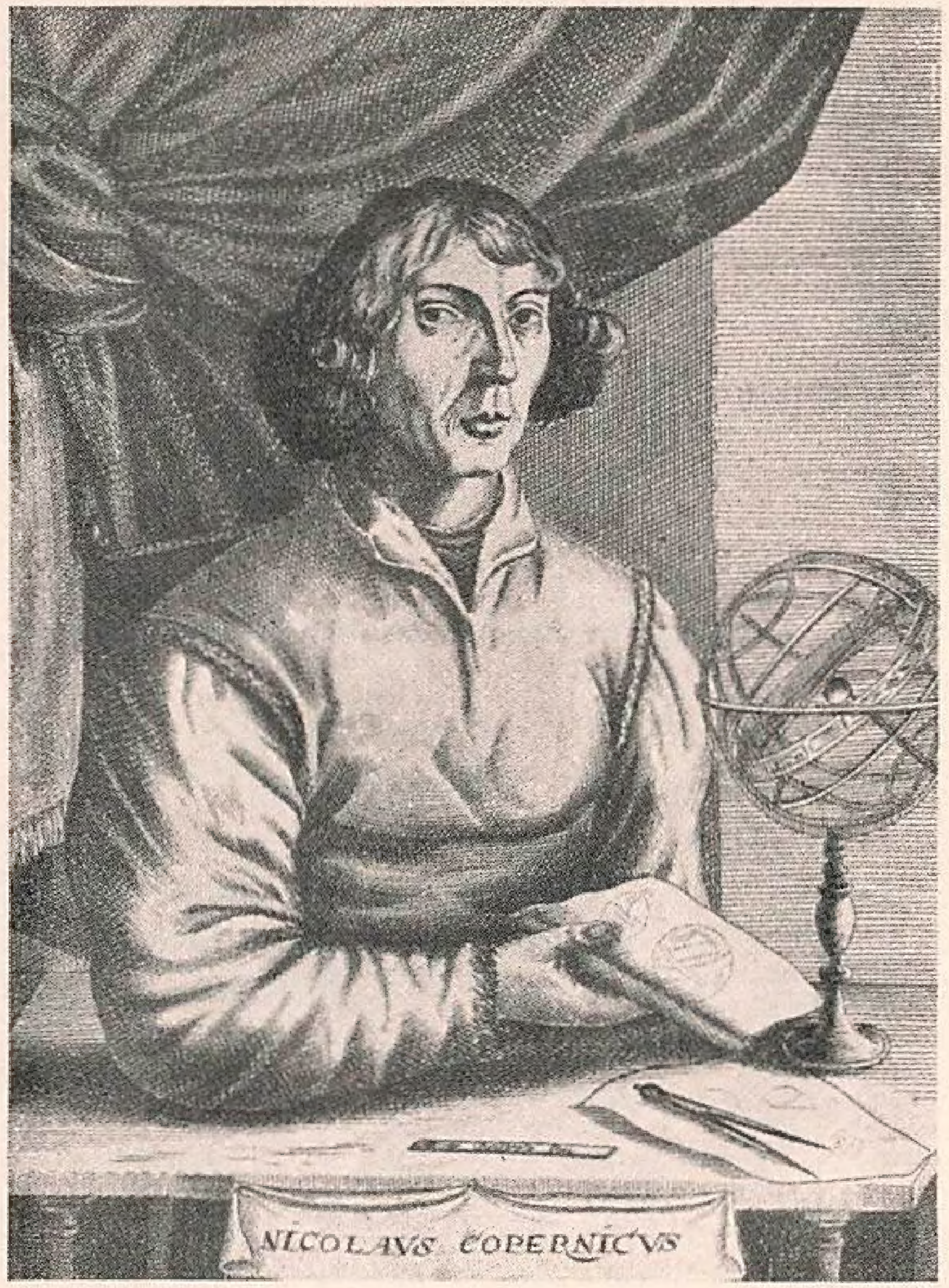

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS (1473–1543)
From steel engraving by E. de Boulanois, Brussels, 1682
Courtesy of the Kosciuszko Foundation

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June Announcement

THE REGULAR JUNE MEETING of the California Academy of Sciences will be held in the Auditorium of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 245 Market Street, on Wednesday evening, June 2, 1943, at eight o'clock. This meeting will be held in conjunction with that of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, the two organizations uniting on this occasion to give special recognition to the Copernicus Quadricentennial. The speaker of the evening will be Professor Earle G. Linsley, Director of the Chabot Observatory, Oakland, California, whose subject will be:

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS THE SCIENTIST

Born on February 19, 1473, at Thorn, Poland, Nicolaus Copernicus lived during the early Renaissance Period when culture and scientific interest were slowly awakening from the lethargy of the Middle Ages. He was a contemporary of Leonardo Da Vinci and an immediate forerunner of Galileo and Francis Bacon. His early education was primarily in mathematics at the University of Cracow. Later he studied astronomy at Bologna and then entered the medical school at Padua. In 1500 Copernicus achieved considerable success teaching mathematics in Rome and, returning to his own country at a somewhat later date, was made a canon in the cathedral at Frauenburg. It was here that he began working out his own system of astronomy.

The logical mind of Copernicus led him to doubt that the action of heavenly bodies could be as complicated as was indicated by the Ptolemaic system. His investigations then led him to consider the sun as the center around which the earth and other members of our planetary system revolve. In addition to discovering this fundamental principle, he became aware of many other astronomical facts such as the movement of the earth on its axis, and the enormous distance of the stars, which explained why their position appeared much the same from any part of the earth's orbit. His theory also enabled him to explain certain other phenomena, such as the variations of the seasons. Copernicus completed his great work *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* ("On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies") in 1530. This was not published, however, until 1543, the year of his death. The first copy is said to have been placed in the author's hands as he lay on his deathbed.

The discovery by Columbus of the New World, establishing the fact that the earth is round, and the astronomical principles formulated by Copernicus were undoubtedly the most important and far-reaching events in this turning point of human history. They were responsible for the centuries of geographical and scientific exploration which followed and to which our modern world as such owes its very existence. As Dr. Stephen P. Mizwa has said, "Thus, as the civilized world of today pays tribute to Copernicus, it may appropriately regard this anniversary as the quadricentennial of modern science."

Dr. Linsley's lecture will be illustrated by slides prepared from the beautiful Copernicus brochure recently issued by the Kosciuszko Foundation, including a colored reproduction of the miniature by the Polish artist Arthur Szyk, which is printed on the cover of the brochure.

The public is cordially invited to hear Professor Linsley.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

NOTICE is hereby given to all Corporate Members that the Council at its meeting of May 21, 1943, approved the applications of Miss Sally Carrighar, Mr. Harry Ross, and Mr. Richard J. West, for MEMBERSHIP in the California Academy of Sciences. If no objection to the election of these applicants be received at the office of the Academy within two weeks after May 27, they will be considered elected.

EARLY NATURALISTS IN THE FAR WEST

NUMBER TWENTY of the Occasional Papers of the California Academy of Sciences, just issued, *Early Naturalists in the Far West,* by Roland H. Alden and John D. Ifft, is a publication of particular interest to the Academy's membership, and to western scientists and historians in general. It is, in the words of the authors, an account of "those adventurers who cast their glance to the sea, sky, and land in a never-ending search for the new."